

The Tragical History of Aaron Burr.

LEON DEL MONTE.

PS 635

.Z9

G451

Copy 1

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

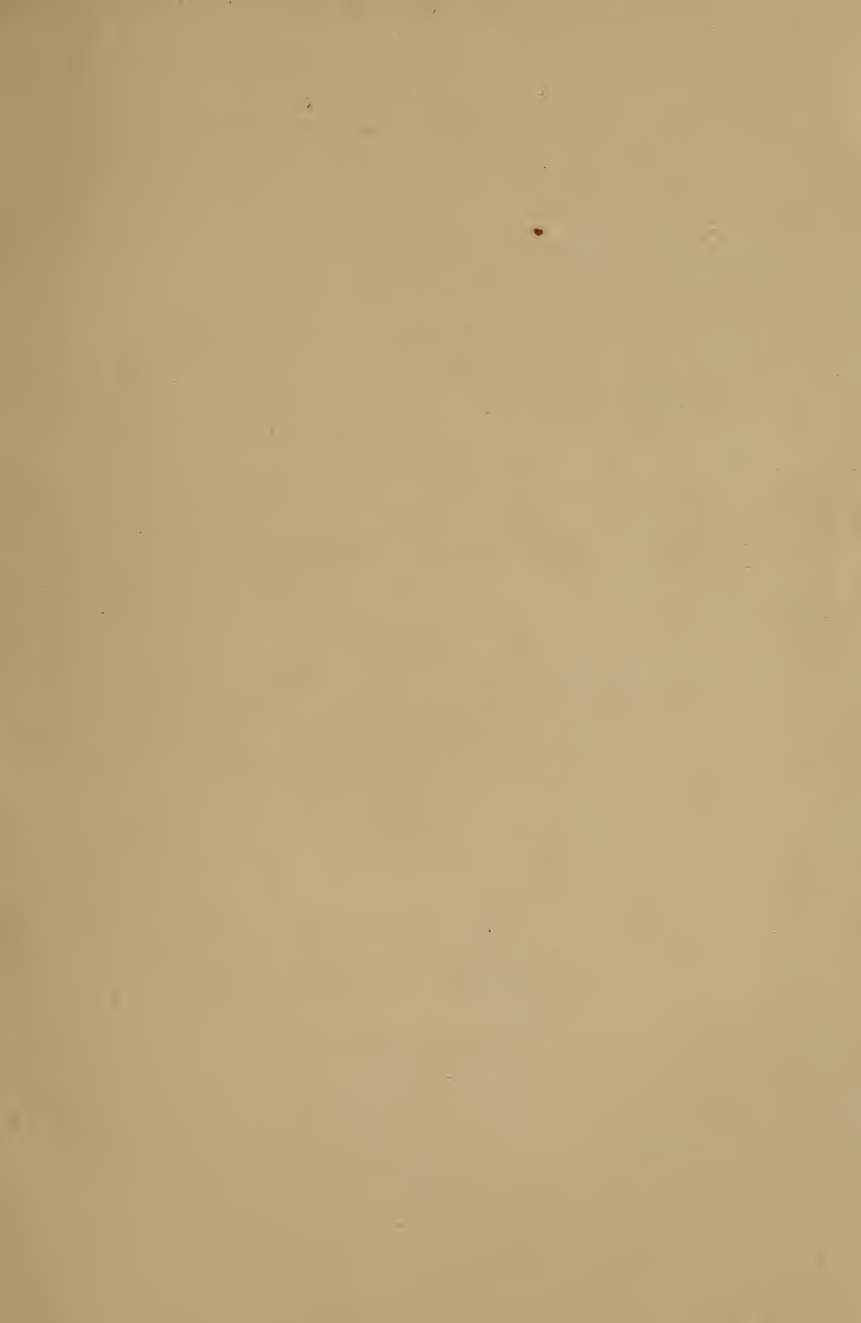
PS635

Chap. Copyright No.

Shelf Z9G451

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.





DEL MONTE'S PLAY

THE

Tragical History of Aaron Burr

WHEREIN IS SET FORTH

His Treason against the United States, His Plan to Conquer Mexico, the Destruction of Blennerhassett's Island Home, and Other Incidents

34
WRITTEN BY
LEON DEL MONTE

Peter Gibson

CINCINNATI

1889



PS 635
29 G451

"The right of Dramatization reserved."

COPYRIGHT, 1889,
BY ROBERT CLARKE & CO.

SOURCE OF THE PLOT.

This play is taken from that period in the life of Colonel Aaron Burr at the time of the funeral of Alexander Hamilton until a short time after his death.

Colonel Burr was elected Vice-President of the United States in A. D. 1800, and the following year, on the fourth of March, took his seat. Owing to some political differences and trouble with Mr. Hamilton, a duel was fought at Weehawken Heights, July 11, 1804. Mr. Hamilton was killed. On March 2, 1805, Colonel Burr bid farewell to the Senate.

The precise date on which Colonel Burr conceived his plans for the conquest of Mexico is not known, but it may reasonably be supposed that his final decision was taken shortly after March 2, 1805. In the spring of 1805, he made a tour through the west, and as far south as New Orleans. At the same time negotiation for the purchase of the Baron Bastrop tract of land, on the Washita river, was being carried on. His plans for the settlement of these lands, the severance of the West from the Eastern States and conquest of Mexico, were told to many, and were eagerly seized upon. He returned to the East to com-

plete arrangements, and in August, 1806, accompanied by his accomplished daughter, Mrs. Alston, he reached Blennerhassett's home, an island in the Ohio river near Marietta. This place was considered the rendezvous for his eastern followers. And now the work really began; boats were built, provisions were gathered, and recruits landed ready to go South. Shortly after this date, alarming rumors were circulated that Colonel Burr was connected with some plans hostile to this country. Notwithstanding the act passed by the Ohio Legislature, and his arrest at Lexington, Kentucky, and his failure to secure General Wilkinson's aid with the United States troops, he went on securing recruits. Then came the proclamation of the President for his arrest. The explosion was terrific, and he was arrested near Wakefield, Alabama. The men, boats, and stores were abandoned, for Colonel Burr had fled, leaving all his followers in the lurch. Many people were arrested, and indignation was at fever heat.

Colonel Burr's plans were :

First. He looked forward to and would give assistance in case of secession of the West. This he advocated and ardently hoped would take place. The purchase of the Bastrop lands were effected, so that he and his followers would be in the neighborhood at the right time, and near New Orleans, which was to be the capital.

Second. Should the revolt not take place as soon as these lands were reached, he would then, without delay, seize

upon New Orleans and conquer Mexico, and be emperor on the throne of the Montezumas. Fat offices and spoils were to be the pay of his followers. For assistance in these plans he relied upon his friends and their money, also the British navy, and General Wilkinson, with the troops, and the dissatisfaction of the Mexicans with their present government.

Colonel Burr was tried at Richmond for treason, and received what is termed a "Scotch verdict:"

"That Aaron Burr is not proved to be guilty under the indictment by any evidence submitted to us" [the jury].

Mrs. Alston was shipwrecked at sea ; and, shortly after, Colonel Burr received a stroke of paralysis, and died.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AARON BURR.....	<i>Vice-President of the United States.</i>
HARMAN BLENNERHASSETT	<i>An Irish settler on the Ohio river.</i>
GENERAL JAMES WILKINSON.....	<i>Commander of the western army.</i>
COLONEL HUGH PHELPS.....	<i>Commander of the Wood county militia.</i>
WILLIAM C. C. CLAIBORNE.....	<i>Governor of Louisiana</i>
CAPTAIN EDMUND P. GAINES.....	<i>Commander of Fort Soddart.</i>
SHERIFF THEODORE BRIGHTWELL..	<i>At Wakefield.</i>
OFFICER JOHN GRAHAM.....	<i>Government detective.</i>
NICHOLAS PERKINS.....	<i>A lawyer at Wakefield.</i>
EDMUND RANDOLPH.....	<i>Attorney for Colonel Burr.</i>
LIEUTENANT CUSHING.	<i>Officer under Wilkinson.</i>
LIEUTENANT KINGSBURY	<i>Same.</i>
LIEUTENANT PORTER.....	<i>Same.</i>
LIEUTENANT SWANN.....	<i>Same.</i>
WILLIAM COLEMAN.	<i>A friend of Alexander Hamilton.</i>
JUDGE JAMES WORKMAN	<i>Judge of New Orleans.</i>
MAJOR ASHLEY.....	<i>A friend of Burr.</i>
ADMIRAL TRUXTON.....	<i>Same.</i>
GENERAL EATON.....	<i>Same.</i>
GENERAL DAYTON.....	<i>Same.</i>
WILLIAM P. VAN NESS.....	<i>Same.</i>
COMFORT TYLER.....	<i>Same.</i>
SAMUEL SWARTWOUT.....	<i>Friend of Burr.</i>
PETER TAYLOR.....	<i>Servant to Blennerhassett.</i>
JACOB KROUTZMEYER	<i>Innkeeper at Wakefield.</i>
BARLOW.	<i>Citizen.</i>
MURRAY.....	<i>Same.</i>
SPRATT.....	<i>Same.</i>
THEODOSIA B. ALSTON.....	<i>Daughter of Colonel Burr.</i>
MRS. BLENNERHASSETT.....	
KATE.....	<i>Daughter of innkeeper.</i>



AARON BURR.

TRAGICAL HISTORY OF AARON BURR.

A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS.

ACT I—Scene I.

Court-yard in front of White Swan Inn, suburbs of New York.

Enter from Inn Citizens BARLOW, MURRAY, SPRATT—
Citizens dress of 1804.

Barlow. The first bulletins placed in the city,
Alexander Hamilton has been shot
By Colonel Burr in a duel to-day,
Was terrible news to the people.
It will shake this country wherever known.
'Tis very sad and most lamentable.

Spratt. Hamilton was beloved by our country,
And his vacant chair will be hard to fill.
We have few patriots as good as he ;
His loss is almost irreparable.

Barlow. His taking off was a most shameful crime.
Come closer ; though I whisper something wrong,
I must have it out. Now, I say, my friends,
I hope this wrong may be atoned for,
And the author will meet his just deserts.

Murray. Every citizen through this wide land
Wishes the same ; 't is law, justice and right.

Spratt. Alack the day that our Vice-President
Should put himself in such a dilemma.

Barlow. Our Alexander Hamilton is slain,
And to-day all that is mortal of him
Will be buried in the grave. Solemn thought.
What terrible anguish the dying one
Must feel to know, as his life ebbs away,
His body will be made a feast for worms
Before its time, and ere God called him ;
And to know his slayer will live on earth
Enjoying for a longer time pleasures
Which he would wish but forever denied.

Spratt. To send a man's soul to heaven or hell
Must press and pinch the conscience.

Murray. Very true ;
'T is said that all humans have a conscience,
But some, methinks, have sold or loaned theirs out ;
Yet, you are right, we are all born with them.
But 't is a strange essence, this conscience,
For one must do wrong before he finds out
Whether he owns one or not. If 't is found
It is a breeder of discontent, and
One anxiously wishes to be rid of't ;
'T will not deter one from another wrong.

Spratt. Man's knowledge of right and wrong is the guard ;
Conscience is the scourge for wrong.

Murray. That may be,
But I hold that the gallows or the jail
Is a better preventive and scourge.

Barlow. No doubt they are effectual.

Murray.

Ha! ha!

This inflicted punishment is an
Extremely unsafe guard to the public.
One will choose conscience every time before
He will the gallows—there's no questioning this.

Barlow. How now! Do you laugh at it?

Murray. Oh! ne, no;

I cry for it, that a good thing must be
Purchased with a wrong, excites my disgust.
My humor is stirred; and, as I can not
Laugh, I therefore must cry. Spratt, what say you?

Spratt. Who'e'r takes life, is a robber of all.
Stings of remorse will on his head soon fall.
His mind will go 'round the poll of his brain,
Like the bears, pursued by the dogs, on high—
An endless-ceasing journey into time;
And nothing but the grave will rid him of 't.
Thus we are made, and thus we are.

Murray. Bravo!

Now, tell us, good sir, what disposition
Will they make of Burr, when he's in the law?

Spratt. Laws are merely rules, made for protection.
They are shields 'gainst wrong; not pits to trap.
Laws are best served, when the people obey.
'Tis each one's duty to observe the laws,
And assist his neighbor to do likewise.
Penalties for infraction are rightful;
But, like the fishmonger's net, some small fish
Squeeze through, and some big ones break through.
We do not love our rights well enough yet.
'Tis such a new thing to be free, we are
Puzzled how to act; we guard with looseness.

Law should be the imperial sovereign—
Be courted, wooed, loved, and upheld.
There always are too many assassins.

Murray. But, in this present case, will it be warped?

Spratt. 'Tis early yet; the courts must decide that.

Murray. But there is set forth a penalty?

Spratt. Yes; with a rope his throat is to be choked.

He will not insist upon fulfillment.

Murray. He does n't want it to happen to him;
When it's for others, 't is a different thing.
Most people think about the same on this.

Spratt. If one objects to feed out of the trough,
Let him keep company other than boars.
The law is merciful; 't would be a wrong
Not to punish, and preserve welcome peace—
The boon of citizens—all o'er the land.
That the law is stern, it is for the best.

Murray. For this killing, this wrong, some few will weep,
While the crape is fresh; but 't will soon o'erblow.

Spratt. More shame that it is so; but let's to town.

Murray. Come, we will make haste. We tarry too long.
All the people weep. Let's attend the train. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter WILLIAM COLEMAN, SAM SWARTWOUT, WILLIAM P. VAN NESS, from up the road. Distant booming of guns and tolling of bells at intervals. In this scene, COLEMAN and SWARTWOUT wear short, hanging swords; citizen's dress.

Coleman. These are trying times for our young country.
Our people have just fought 'gainst rule of kings;
Blood and treasure freely offered on the
Altar, for our freedom and our union.

Now Crime most foul holds her black wings on high,
And threatens destruction to our nation.
Our Vice-President, to his former faults,
Now adds a murder to his list of wrongs.
As a public servant and officer,
He has willfully neglected his trust,
And abused the confidence of the people.
He does not vie with the wild goose, soaring
To heaven ; but scrambles for food with hens,
In a barn yard.

Swartwout. The one who lives has many virtues, which
You know not, or give little heed of them.
I will tell you of a few, that your heart
May be made to feel more charitable,
And you may think less ill of what's been done.

Coleman. I care little to hear of his virtues.
Think less of what has been done ! God, hear him !
From oldest times, both common and statute,
The law has been, Thou shalt not kill.

Swartwout. We'll put it on the plane of self-defense.

Coleman. You put it where you wish. The fact remains ;

Also the circumstances of it all.

Dayton. Then, we will talk of things that led to this.
Our Vice-President—pushed into the ring,
Goaded on all sides by vicious enemies—
Frenzied, did spring upon the nearest one.
For he has been outdone these many years
Unjustly, and by this Hamilton's hand.

Coleman. Colonel Burr has always led the assault,
He the aggressor, in all that's been done ;
And for this last contest he did prepare,

And practiced long for this, his deadly shot.
A cruel butcher for all purposes!
And, since Benedict Arnold, I know not one,
Sunk into deeper ignominy withal.
O times! O times! that monsters should hold power!
'T is the curse of homes and nations, when 't is so.
O Hamilton! in the midst of thy days,
Ere thou reached the zenith of thy glory,
By a dastard hand art taken away.
Let tears of human pity fall for thee!
Hero, statesman, jurist, and patriot,
Well-born; upright and honest thou hast lived.
You never did a willful harm to man.
To avert mishap, and right alleged wrongs,
With all thy power, thou didst vainly try.
The apparition of a fallen son,
As a harbinger of death from the grave,
With his shriveled hands laid bare his bosom,
Did show to you his dreadful, cruel wounds,
Point to a yawning grave, and warn you off;
But you must fall. Thy little babes did stand,
With blanched faces, stretching out to you
Their little hands; and, pointing to their mother,
With eager, lisping eloquence cried out:
"O dear papa! stay, stay, and live for us!"
You who have hearts full of love and pity—
Have wept o'er moldering ruins of friends—
Weep now.

Van Ness. Truly, he is sad, and his heart is full;
We should speak to him kindly.

Swartwout. So we will;
But he must hear our own views of this case.

Hear us! Hamilton did grievously
Persecute and pursue Colonel Burr;
Nor quit he from the chase till this last theme.
Both in county, state, and other offices,
For chief of the army, he was o'erthrown;
And was published to the world, unsafe
To hold the reigns of government; and, more,
He advocated dismemberment of
The Union, and on the principles of
The Jacobins he would stand and govern;
That he would infuse rottenness in the
Only party which had the welfare of
Our country at heart; that he would tear down
Our priceless treasure—our country's freedom.

Van Ness. And, with the Spanish minister, did plot,
To bring our country in another war.
Also, to make it a second-class nation—
Make it a province to another land—
To France. Our ports were open to their ships,
For commerce, and for building, and all else.
Every thing for foreign shall be first.
All our home industries must wait on them.
We have just fought 'gainst kings for freedom.
'T is false that he is for these or a king.

Coleman. Aye, but none other than himself must reign.
He will be all; all things to him is gain.

Swartwout. In late contest, he wished but denial
Of accusations, on him unjustly thrust.
He was not much in wrong for the killing.
Both of them went for the self-same purpose;
'T is the fashion.

Van Ness. Out upon the fashion!

I'll be the first to bear it to its grave.
But 't was not good for Hamilton to say,
"Defeat and perdition to Colonel Burr!"
And manage in a most disgraceful manner,
And charge Burr with his own dishonesty;
That, for private motives, he resisted
The admission of the state of Franklin;
That he had some private plans with Miro,
Governor of the provinces of Spain,
Prior to his chair as Vice-President.

Coleman. Against this array, you make but denial,
And heap dishonesty upon the dead.
Your defense is too thin; it lacks substance.
But 't is your purpose, plan, and desire,
To make a patient hero of this fellow.
No blacker-hearted villain walks the earth
Than this, your friend; for when he smiles, he grins.
For an outrageous plot, he is clever.

Enter BURR.

Swartwout. Here he comes. This blow will crush him.

Coleman. Perhaps.

Probably he has instructions for you.

Go; meet and kneel to your chief. 'T is proper.

Van Ness. Ne'er have I seen him so melancholy.
Look! with bowed head, and measured, tott'ring steps,
He comes.

Coleman. What is he made of, that he should
Act in a different manner?

Van Ness. Tut, tut!

Burr. Friends Swartwout and Van Ness, I am most sad.
Be kind to me in this disastrous day.

You, my friends, know all. The people, later,
Will anxiously wait to hear it explained.
Farewell to ambition, office, and fame!
I am an outcast and a fugitive,
With a price on my head. Hear me, my friends;
Spare my faults to the people, and tell them
Of all my virtues, should you find any.
Say all the good you can. I am in need
Of true friends' kindness and their sympathy.
But he himself made his wife a widow,
And I—I have made his name immortal.

Swartwout. Cheer up, Colonel; maybe 't is not so ill
As you think. It might be worse for you, sir.

Burr. It is ill enough. But who is your friend?

Coleman. Look at my face; I think you will know me.
This absent-thought will not serve your purpose.
Hear you the guns and bells cry out your knell?
They speak for the dead, and 'gainst the living.

Swartwout. Nay, not for Burr the guns cry out; my
sword,

Mark you, will say it is for Hamilton. [*Does not draw.*]

Van Ness. Your sword will find no target for its point.
Be quiet; rush not on, and make things worse.
The bells and the guns, with their iron throats,
May cry out other knells than what we know.
No more fighting, if I can prevent it.
The man with the scythe will come soon enough.
Farewell, Coleman! Please leave us here. [*Exit COLEMAN.*]
Poor Coleman! he takes this all to himself.
His sympathies outweigh his discretion.
But give us your orders. 'T is best you leave,
For the present only. We counsel well,

For you will be indicted for murder.

Already has action begun for it.

We, at least, are your friends, true and willing.

We will do your bidding to the letter.

Burr. Indeed, I am wretched. To-night I'll go
To Perth Amboy, to Commodore Truxton.

I will seek his counsel. Then I know not.

Meet me at the wharf, at dusk to-night.

Have you a boat to take me to the shore.

This clamor will soon cool. It can not last long—

It is too maddened, and too white a heat.

O, would that it had never come!

Van Ness. Affairs have taken on serious shape.
None can tell how it will end.

Swartwout.

Let us go.

Colonel, we will be ready.

Burr.

Fare you well!

[*Exeunt VAN NESS and SAM.*]

'T is strange, that all this uproar should hold forth

For such a petty cause. 'T was he, not me,

Who brought this on. He would have killed me,

Without benefit of clergy, if he could.

But now, they'll call his ghost to undo me.

Will all my former friends desert me, now

That I am down and broken? We will see.

While I'm in the chair, as Vice-President,

I must conform to the rules. I will resign.

I will hold no longer, under such a

Government as this is. One does not know

Who are his friends or foes; they dress alike.

Now will I break loose from these iron chains,

And court that lovely mistress, Mexico.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *A Street scene. Time, near dusk.*

Enter GENERAL DAYTON and MAJOR ASHLEY. (One year since the last scene.) All in citizen's dress of the time. (A First-Scene setting.)

Ashley. When did you last see Colonel Burr?

Dayton. Friday.

He was anxious that all should be present
At the meeting.

Ashley. 'Tis very important.

All are disposed to be concerned in 't;

So, I take it, all will strive to be there.

He is wonderfully energetic—

A shrewd and careful schemer.

Dayton. Oh! yes;

But very restless, that sometimes I fear

He may act hastily.

Ashley. Oh! have no doubts.

He will be cautious; for, of all his schemes,

This is the greatest, and needs looking to.

But 't is not his first acquaintance with it;

More like an old one, re-met. Here comes Eaton.

Dayton. He goes the same way with us. [*Enter EATON.*

Eaton. Good-day, friends.

Ashley. Good-day to you.

Eaton. We will walk together.

I can call your destination.

Ashley. Agreed.

Eaton. Whom are we to meet?

Ashley. I can not name all.

Many, who have already joined in this,

Will not be present, for they live out West,
And can not come. General Wilkinson,
He has recently been appointed the
Commander of the troops throughout the West.

Eaton. A just recognition of his merits.
He is a good soldier, and a brave man.
But it is rather incredible,
That he should be in league with Colonel Burr.
He is not one to play the lieutenant
To any man. Besides, his position
Should preclude it.

Ashley. He will to the Colonel.
They are old friends. As for the office,
He will not be the first man who has
Done similar things.

Eaton. 'T is hard to believe.

Ashley. And Commodore Truxton, who has lately
Been requested to resign his office;
Eric Bollman and Captain Dupeyster,
John Adair, also Samuel Swartwout;
Daniel Clarke and others, from New Orleans—
But they will not be present this evening.
Burr has clever plans, which he will recount.
He has just returned from a trip out West.

Eaton. I've recently returned from Tripoli,
And therefore am not advised of all
Public affairs and happ'nings here at home.
I am informed that Colonel Burr has
Really regained his former power.

Dayton. He has many friends. and is a power
Throughout the country, particularly
In the South and far West; but there are some

Avenues to his ambition which are
Forever closed. This he realizes,
And now we have General George Clinton
For Vice-President.

Eaton. A good selection.

Dayton. 'T is said he satisfies a strong party ;
He is wealthy and from a good old stock.

Eaton. Then his appointment is well taken.
With ability, wealth and family ties
Are not good grounds to disqualify him ;
Better have a man who stands on his own
Feet than one bolstered on props of others.

Dayton. This is generally made a bugbear.

Eaton. False modesty or a borrowed trade-mark
Is all the virtue it 's entitled to.
Less pussy-feet would be better served.
President Jefferson's recent purchase
Of Louisiana was a master-stroke.
His wisdom in this can not be gainsaid.

Dayton. 'T is of infinite value to the West ;
An excellent port at New Orleans.
It removes the odious Spanish tax,
And gives protection 'gainst foreign powers ;
But the people are very much harrassed
By the Indians, and the government
Does not afford adequate protection.

Ashley. It is not General Wilkinson's fault ;
He is much hampered by the government.

Dayton. The late cruel massacres of the whites
In the Mississippi Territory
And Alabama should certainly make
It extremely apparent to those in power—

And the President—that these red-skins
Positively have no idea of peace.
When these marauders begin their attacks,
Orders to the troops should be, “No quarter.”
This peace-making business is most absurd.

Ashley. Rather it is a most shameful outrage.
The government deserves severe censure
From every citizen East and West.
This neglect will surely bring on trouble.
This country will be better divided.

Eaton. Our government should give this attention;
Willful waste and neglect is always wrong.

Ashley. There are many other wrongs much talked of;
But, had we not better be going, for
We should not keep others waiting?

Dayton. Let's go. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

A room at Mr. Wheaton's house at Washington. Enter COLONEL BURR; afterward enter MATTHEW LYON, GENERAL DAYTON, MAJOR ASHLEY, COMMODORE TRUXTON, GENERAL EATON, GENERAL ADAIR—all in citizen's dress.

[*Parlor room of a private residence—chairs, table, etc.*]

Burr. Now is this country racked from end to end,
And sorely press'd by home and foreign foes,
And political factions bent on strife
Run tumult and contention 'long the line
To ease their fears or satisfy their wants;
Things not easily attained in this world.
Impending war with Spain and Mexico

Menaces us on all shores and our borders ;
And internal dissensions crown the pile.
Recognition or preferment by our
Government of me is forever lost ;
That last duel has gone sore against me.
I nor no other mortal can withstand
Public opinion ; she is queen. So now
It is a fitting time to execute
My plans, make known my designs, and go West.
If my followers are as true to me
As I am disloyal to the government,
Soon will there be commotions through the land ;
Pitiless men will carry hostile arms,
And President Jefferson must needs look
To the welfare of himself and his chair.
I will be as cruel and relentless
As in my power lies. Although he is
Gentle, peaceful, and magnanimous,
Yet he must be ruined with all the others.
Remain here in passive indifference,
To be scoffed and tabooed by the people,
Does not suit me. I will found an empire—
I will sever this country or rule Mexico.
I was not born to idly waste my days ;
I hate these times of inactivity.
They goad me so I am more fretful than
The waves at sea. But, hark ! some one comes.

*Enter servant, followed by LYON, DAYTON, ASHLEY, TRUX-
TON, EATON, ADAIR.*

Burr. Major Ashley, and friends, welcome you all.
Gentlemen, you form my Eastern staff ; would

That I had my Western comrades here now.
Commanders ne'er had more select aids.

Truxton. We come, at your request, to learn from you
Concerning some important enterprise.

Burr. Which I have formerly advised you of
In a meager manner as to details.
Give ear; this is a favorable time;
Occasion only waits to be accepted.

Lyon. But would you not prefer an embassy?
One could be obtained.

Burr. No; I'll have none of it.
My friends and much money hinge my plans.

Lyon. You could be returned to Congress.

Burr. No, no;
I am done with government positions.

Ashley. People out West have good cause to complain
'Gainst the present methods of our government.
I would not be surprised should they sever.

Burr. Indian troubles, Spanish taxation,
And port duties, are just and good cause.
They are entirely without protection—
Heard you of the severance of the States?

Eaton. I have not been here long enough to know,
But our President's letter to Congress
Leads one to think we will have war with Spain.

Burr. On my Western trip I have made many
Rich and powerful friends, who will join
For this or other schemes, which they know
The common people can be led by the nose.
Thousands are eager to join any plan.
Each one strives to better his condition.
The colony and the Washita sale,

Which, as you know, will serve as a good mask.
Times greatly favor the other projects —
A rebellion will occur. Some are for
The general government should be head,
State government should be secondary.
The other will maintain to the bitter end
That each state is in itself a sovereign.
Some trivial matter may be brought in.
The main issue will be as I have said;
'T will end in a cruel war, but never
Will be satisfactorily adjusted.
Jealousy of imaginary rights
Will force this woeful trouble 'mong the States;
War with Spain is inevitable.
Discontent is widely spread in the West,
The Floridas shall go to this country,
Mexico shall be under our control.
If the West separate, we will rule at
New Orleans, and annex to Mexico.
But should this not occur in a short time
Then we will conquer and rule Mexico,
And you, my followers, shall be enriched.

Ashley. A splendid court, with high dignitaries;
The ideal of a man's much loved dream.

Burr. Mexico is as anxious so throw off
The Spanish yoke as Louisiana
That of France. There is no legal restraint
To deter private parties from conquest;
Especially so, as we help rid them
Of tyrant rulers, and we are welcom'd,
Save a few isolated exceptions.

Adair. I like the plan, and I will pledge to you
Powerful aid and men from Kentucky.

Eaton. A grand plot, and nothing to hinder us ;
I am for it ; will bring what I can.

Truxton. Unless Jefferson and the government
Are privy, I shall not join you in this.

Burr. 'Tis best not inform the world of details,
But to quiet your alarm, will tell you.
From private sources I am assured
That they know and silently acquiesce.
It would be a declaration of war,
Should they openly assist or abet.
Present times are not propitious for this,
For French and British guns would be on them.
General Dearborn is with us ; read this.

[*Hands forged letter.*

Why, the administration is so weak,
That with two thousand faithful soldiers
I could throw them into the Potomac.
You will be in charge of the ships, so now
Inform yourself as to the best method
Of attack on La Vera Cruz, also,
Havana and Carthagená.

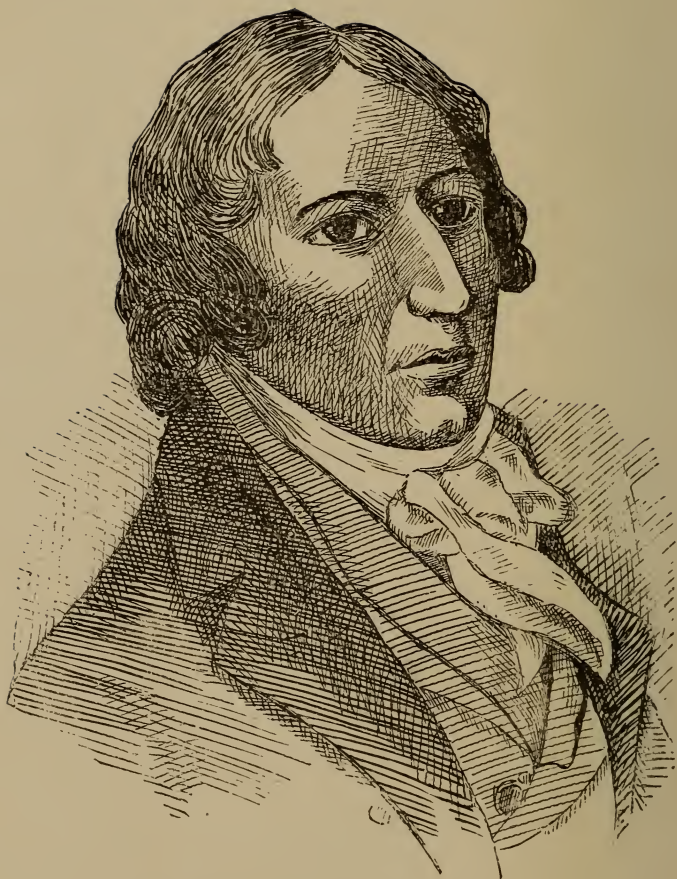
Truxton. Keep me advised, and I will report
All marine matters to you.

Burr. Thanks, Truxton.

Eaton. It will be difficult for these foreigners
To adopt our methods of government.

Burr. Their religion, and most of their customs,
Shall prevail ; we will not rout the peasants.
The power and command is what we want.

Eaton. How about the troops, will not their affection



HARMAN BLENNERHASSETT.

To the present government be enough
To preclude the idea of help from them ?

Burr. Still remembering the late appointment
Of General Wilkinson, yet, there is
Great dissatisfaction among the troops
And under officers; perfected plans
Have not been reached, but the attitude
Of preliminaries is flattering.

Admiral Drake favors us for conquest.
Commodore Preble and Captain Decatur
Have given me assurance of their aid.
At once I will assemble the forces.
We will proceed down the western rivers.
Ships will be at our command at New Orleans.

Ashley. If any present deem it advisable
To withdraw, now let him speak out.

Burr. I think that we are all harmonious.
I am confident of the best blood in
America to take up and assist
In this most important undertaking.

All. We pledge our honor, and will aid the cause.

Burr. Go, as is your wont, and further the cause;
I will keep you all informed. Farewell.

[*Curtain.*]

ACT II—SCENE I.

*In the garden in front of HARMAN BLENNERHASSETT'S
house. Discovered, HARMAN, MRS. BLENNERHASSETT,
PETER TAYLOR (servant). House has small porch.
Set scene with wooden settees and one or two chairs.*

Mrs. Blen. Is not this the day that we should expect
The coming of Colonel Burr and his daughter ?

Harman. Yes, but dear, why are you so sad to-day?

Mrs. Blen. O, Harman, my husband, I've had a dream.
Bear with me, I am only a woman.

Be gentle with me, the future seems dark.

Harman. Dry your eyes, rout your fears, tell me
of it.

Come here, Peter, help me to read the sign,
You have knowledge in dreams, occult science.
Now draw us your cabalistic figures.

Peter. Command me, kind master, I shall obey.
Those most ancient and honorable bonds
Shall be harnessed with the present sign.
All my secret learning shall be summoned.
I'll please you all I can, but should I say
Unwelcome words, blame not the stars nor me.
If it bodes good, I will tell my reading.
Should it bode ill, what shall I do, master?

Harman. Give us your reading, good and true, we'll
choose
The better path for our life's walk.

Peter. Guide me.

Mrs. Blen. I dread and fear to tell it; 'tis fright'ning.
When we are awake, we can take our eyes
From dreadful things; we face them out in dreams.
The involuntary muscles of our brains
Distort and play sad havoc with our minds,
While our bodies lie with Morpheus.

Harman. We are not free agents while we do dream.
None are accountable to God or man.
This is the unexplained secret of God.

Peter. Why do we dream? that is the question.
Is't because our souls leave our bodies?

They must do service in another form.
Are they pent up only for a season ?
Are we double souled, as we are brained ?
No, for one human there is only one,
And it will stay till death its cottage shakes.
Little children may have most horrid dreams ;
Convulsions seize them, and they cry aloud.
They walk about ; they know not where or how.
Yet, sometimes have most pleasant dreams ; how is't ?
When one human is born on earth,
One soul is lost to Heaven.
When one human dies on the earth,
One soul is gained in Heaven.
Who has not seen the painted devil,
In fancy picture books ?
Yet all may see that painted devil,
If in a fire he looks.
Our minds conform to the decrees of nature,
Our bodies worn by the fatigues of time,
The whole make up of a man doth slumber.
The humors of our bodies cause dreams ;
They prick the brain, and print on it some scenes,
Whereupon, when we awaken, we first
Know these unsolicited impressions ;
And we call them dreams, when we are awake.
Yet, if one speaks softly at the ear of
A sleeper, and arouse him then by the
Stirring of the spirits, there are buzzings
In his head, and he dreams on awakening.
Men have dreams by divine revelation,
When it pleases God to send any.

Harman. O come, now, we are waiting ; account it.

Mrs. Blen. I was asleep; a great noise awaked me.
Thick, humid air permeated the room,
And bright-tongued, ravishing flames of fire
Chased each other into dark'ning shadows,
Into which they disappeared; and I heard
Many voices crying out like a mob,
All out of tune; one cried this, and one that;
No two alike, all in wild confusion.
Daz'd and frightened, and almost craz'd with fear,
I rushed to the window and looked out.
There I saw the orchard all on fire.
I screamed to you for help, but you had gone.
Vainly I screamed for my little children.
Wildly I ran down stairs, out on the porch.
The little ones were there waiting for me,
And, laughing, cried out, O, papa is here.
I leaned over the railing, you were there,
Lying prostrate on the ground, and so still—
O, God, there a corpse, with some one near you!
The flames and the crowd were coming nearer.
Our children became white like specters.
They seemed to fade away into the air;
I could not recognize them. I fainted.

[*Peter draws figures on a paper.*]

Harman. Dearest wife, we'll thank God 'twas but a dream.

I can not find a meaning for this all.

Peter. Nor I, my master, lest untimely death
Comes to one we love; I can not name him.

Mrs. Blen. Aye, Peter, there is more in this than that.

Harman. Come, what does your learning foretell?

Peter. Very sad, master.

Harman. Read to me the sign.

I shall judge.

Peter. The moon is in the dragon's tail. Saturn
Is retrograding, and in the twelfth house.
Both are afflicted, and this denotes ill.
The dream is of near time. By my figure,
The dreamer's calm life will be shaken.
The growth of an orchard is very slow.
This signifies all of life's work and gains
Will be lost. Then you will be taken first.
Then, I know not who will follow. Alas!
Forgive me, for I hope it may not be.

Harman. A very dismal and unwelcome tale,
And one which I do not care to believe.

Peter. Here I draw you the sacred pentacle.

[*Draws figures.* See Appendix.

Have this engraved on gold, and wear it;
Hang it around your neck with a gold chain,
And at new moon, once, ask Anael's help.

Harman. A plague on your mysteries, they hold me
In their grasp, for they are fascinating.

Peter. Kind master, I merely read the sign-posts.

Mrs. Blen. This seems to be a warning from on high.
Harman, I do not like the idea
Of linking our lives and fortune with Burr;
Remember the duel—it was a crime.
He is ambitious; we, plain country folks.
Think well before you act. Let us stay here.
I love my pleasant home; we are happy
And contented; you will not go away?

Harman. I will do nothing without serious thought.

But he comes here at our request, and we
Must hear his story, then we will decide.

Mrs. Blen. You are the host, so give him good welcome.

Peter. I see some people coming; I'll inquire.

[*Exit PETER.*]

Mrs. Blen. He is coming now. [*Enter PETER.*]

Peter. My master, Colonel Burr and his daughter,
Also many others, have arrived.

*Enter COLONEL BURR, MRS. THEODOSIA ALSTON, MAJOR
ASHLEY, and COMFORT TYLER—all in citizen's clothes
of the times.*

Harman. Colonel Burr, you and all are most welcome.

Burr. Greetings to you and your fair lady.

Harman. We'll show you rooms; retire for a while.
You must be sore in need of rest.

Burr. We are.

And will accept your hospitality. [*Exit all save PETER.*]

Peter. A notable and numerous company.

Now, indeed, my hands will be full of work.

A grand ball to-night, and many people

Arriving from the towns and villages.

We will have good times, music, and dancing.

I'll stroll down to the wharf, and see who's there. [*Exit.*]

*Enter BURR, BLENNERHASSETT, COMFORT TYLER, and
MAJOR ASHLEY.*

Burr. A lovelier spot I have never seen,
And all by your hands ta'en from wild nature.

All this speaks well for your ability.

A lovely home, a lovely wife, and babes

And happiness. What more on earth is there,

And yet you might have more ; you are worthy,
Learned in science and art ; you are most capable
To fill any seat ; you lack ambition.
Your place is not here, 'tis next a ruler.
Our President will do for where he is.
'Twill not be long that he rules o'er the West.

Ashley. These plans were discussed at Washington
By powerful men through the country.
My most hearty support goes with this cause.

Tyler. All this I know, and I renew my pledge.

Burr. Thanks, Ashley and Tyler, my true comrades ;
And now, Blennerhassett, will you join us ?
First come will receive the highest honors.

Harman. My eyes and ears have been most attentive.
I must give up all I have to join you ;
Must leave this home for foreign fields untried.

Burr. These golden fields are spangled o'er with gems
Beautiful, superb, of priceless value.
Hold but one, your proud name is registered
Among the men and powers of the lands.
Your children will have an inheritance
Outrivaling the glorious luster
Of that imperial monarch, Sirius.
Envious kings and queens will crowd each other,
Scramble 'mong themselves, and stand on tip-toe
To satisfy their hungry eager gaze
On you and yours.

Harman. This is a glorious plan ; I must join you.

Ashley. There are many in with us, and all true—
Commodore Truxton, Adair, and others.
You will have good company, that is sure.

Burr. General Wilkinson joins us with troops.

At the Cumberland we will be five thousand.
All the Mexicans are anxious for war,
And will welcome any ruler than Spain.
Ha, ha, to be rulers of Mexico!
And you, my friends, will be courtiers.
Luxury and plenty, a real life's dream,
Few know this at present, but all will soon.
'Tis best not tell the crowd, their heads will turn;
They will talk too much, and lose their wits.

Harman. All this is most pleasing; I will join you.
Here I will grow old and poor, but with you,
Wealth, fame, a new country, and position.
Enroll me now. Peter, bring a table. [*Calls for servant.*
Pen, ink, and paper. [*Enter servant with same.*

[*Burr hands a paper.*]

Here is the bond which binds us together.

[*Blennerhassett signs the paper.*]

Burr. Things written remain.

Harman.

I am satisfied.

What will be my duties?

Burr. What we need most now is money and boats,
Men and provisions. I'll tend to the men.
You provide the boats and all else you can.
A goodly number of men will reach here
With arms and stores and boats. They have orders.
When you leave, bring all the women you can.
They are useful in times of war and peace.

Harman. Fifteen boats, with needful stores, I will give.

Burr. Good pay for this you get when we are there.

Tyler. I and my men will leave this very night.

Await you at the Cumberland river.

Fare you well.

Burr. Major Tyler, farewell! [*Exit TYLER.*

Harman. We give a ball to our friends this evening.
You will see many people from around,
And choose you whom you will select for this.
No doubt, we can get good men and arms here.

Burr. We will not purchase arms lest some take fright;
But each man provide himself best he can.
We start not to conquest, but 'twill end so.
I have made converts at Marietta,
And shall look around the country for more.

Harman. We leave you now; go where you please.
Give me full orders to-morrow. [*Exit HAR. and ASH.*

Burr. Ha, ha!
I have him; what a simple fool, 'tis well.
An easy task to get him. My daughter!

Enter THEODOSIA.

Theo. You would speak with me?

Burr. You've seen our hostess.
Did you speak with her, and what said she?

Theo. In great haste, are you not? 'Tis best go slow,
For should alarm seize them.

Burr. 'Twill not seize him.

Theo. One already? Then the other will come.

Burr. Did you tell all?

Theo. No, only a little.

I did not wish to alarm her.

Burr. 'Tis well.

What said she of moving to Washita?

Theo. She is not much inclined; she loves her home—
This lovely island—I do not blame her.

Burr. Blame no one; but she will have more when there.

Theo. All this and many things I have explained.
See her at the ball and speak with her.
I will make preparations and be there.

Burr. You told her nothing concerning Mexico?

Theo. Nothing of the plans. I praised the country,
And said I longed greatly to live there.

Burr. And what said she?

Theo. Words, but nothing to the point. [*Exit.*

Burr. A noble daughter; and a precious scheme.
My plans, my designs, are my heart's love.
They must be first. All else must wait on them.
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A hall in the house. Enter COLONEL BURR.

Burr. Now, am I fairly launch'd upon the way,
And all threat'ning clouds fast disappearing?
The government shows no signs against me,
And General Wilkinson is silent.
I shall set a feast. All who eat with me
Must henceforth do my will. They will be slaves.
Gaunt hunger gnaws the stomachs of my set;
They would eat before the meal is prepared.
The hot viands will hardly cool e'er cropped,
For these winged creatures are nearly starved.
But I will hold them in a tightening grasp.
None shall be favored, lest contention comes.
E'en now I see the silvery light of morn
And fortune beck'ning me on to the goal,
The throne and mines of the Montezumas.

Enter PETER, suddenly.

Peter. Your gracious pardon I ask.

Burr. Ah, how so?

You know not how to come, or come too soon.

You come abruptly on me, now explain

Who sent you? And why are you come to me?

Peter. My master. I am a willing servant.

All is ready, and you are expected.

Shake off that despondent gloom which you wear,

For every one expects to see you gay.

Burr. You are a knowing, witty fool, I see.

Peter. Not me, yet all fools are witty; but then
Every witty one is not a fool.

It takes a knowing one to play it well.

Burr. There's learning in you, knave; I have at you.

Aye, gayety is my wanton spirit.

How did you guess it? By sucking your thumbs?

I'll be sworn you have been eavesdropping me.

I'll have no more of this foolish playing.

You're too smart; 'tis a pity you're not larger.

Peter. If largeness was greatness, I would miss it.

I stand not high when measured with a tree,

And my stomach holds only two quarts of beer.

I am not smart with you, much less a knave.

Burr. What say you? Take that. [*Cuffs him.*]

Peter. Colonel, do not strike me.

I would do you no harm or injury.

Burr. Ah, the fool weeps.

Peter. A fool can laugh and cry;
And cry because he laughed;

And laugh because he cried.

See, I laugh now; ha, ha!

Burr. Where is your cap with bells? You should wear it.

Peter. When I play the fool before a king,
I will wear a cap and make the bells ring.

Burr. When I am king, you shall be my fool. [*Exit.*

Peter. Lord, what an occupation; when he's king,
I must be a fool. I will not pray for't. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Ball-room at house. COLONEL BURR, THEODOSIA ALSTON,
HARMAN, MRS. BLENNERHASSETT, MAJOR ASHLEY,
and guests. Only MAJOR ASHLEY and guests dance the
Minuet.

Burr. A beautiful woman. Ah, lucky man
Who has her affections and her for wife.

Theo. And as lovely as she is beautiful;
Noble traits and a sweet disposition.

Burr. Ne'er before has woman affected me.

Theo. You must speak with her; tell her of the plans.

Burr. Would that you had done so.

Theo. Here she comes.

Burr. Most lovely hostess, our talk was of you.

Theo. Indeed so, and we said all that was kind.
You must be a sister, for I love you.
I hope our lives will be much together.

Mrs. Blen. I am so pleased to have you here to-night,
And hope you will pass the time pleasantly.
Among my many friends you may find some

Not quite as brilliant as you might have wished,
But they are all noble men and women.

Theo. All whom I've met I like.

Burr. You first of all,
And none here or elsewhere will rival you.

Theo. I will return presently.

Mrs. Blen. Have you danced?

Theo. No; but I shall the next set.

Burr. Dear madam,
Make me a present while I'm in the mood.
Give me that pretty rose which lies content,
Nestling near your heart in lovely bower.

Mrs. Blen. This rose you may have; few who would
wish it.

Burr. I will treasure it, and only for you.

Mrs. Blen. O, fie! You must not think on those things,
Or else I will withhold the gift.

Burr. Do not
Be so cruel, I shall be much saddened.
When men have desires they are undone
Till they succeed in capture. Be gentle. [*Hands rose.*]
Come, may I dance with you in the next set?

Mrs. Blen. After the guests are placed, then I'll with
you.

Burr. Or let us walk out on the balcony.
A pleasant talk with you I'll prize most dear.

Mrs. Blen. If the sets are full I will go with you.

Burr. I hope they are full; also, I hope not.
Which pleasure I wish I do not know.
To be at your side, look into your eyes,
To be near you, is what I desire.

Mrs. Blen. You must not say that. I will call the sets.
[*Dance the Minuet.*]

Harman. I have talked with your father of his plans,
And have consented. You will be with us?

Theo. I am with my father, heart and spirit.

Harman. Do you return East?

Theo. Yes; to my husband.
But we both come West shortly.

Harman. We move at once, and leave here forever.
This place will be sold, for we need money.

Theo. Can you not retain this dear island home;
Your wife may be unwilling to lose it?

Harman. No; I have invested much money here.
Am almost ruined. There's no income here.
The future holds out most pleasing favors.

Theo. Hear me, sir; do not run so far from home,
After the bow, that you can not return.

Harman. You prick my brain; I never thought on
that.

But I have signed and given my word,
Which is my honor, so I will stand fast.

Theo. I do not suggest that you now withdraw,
But said only of retaining this home.

Harman. Much as I would like, it can not be.
How little I know; I'm taught by this girl.

Theo. Best of men betimes listen to women.

Harman. This I have heard, but never did believe
They could give safe counsel.

Theo. 'Tis worth regard.

Harman. 'Tis only fools who will not take advice.
My wife's counsels have always been spurned.
In future I will take more heed of her.

Theo. You will not go far amiss, my friend. [*Retire.*

[*Enter messenger convert from militia.*

Mess. Colonel Burr, I crave a hearing from you.

The message I bring is of importance.

[*Exit all, save Burr and Harman, and Mess.*

Burr. Come, talk aside, what is it brings you here?

Mess. Edward Tiffin, Governor of Ohio,

By orders, has passed a bill in the House.

'Tis widely known. Here is a copy of it.

Burr. By whose orders has this been done? I'll read.

From President Jefferson; the meddler,

He puts his hands and face in every thing.

Mess. Speak not so 'gainst our gracious president.

We Western people love and esteem him.

'Twould be cousin to treason to talk thus.

Burr. I meant not so. Do many here love him?

Mess. Aye sir, the whole country, few exceptions.

Burr reads:

“ Well authenticated information

Has reached us, that war-like preparations

Through the West, and in your neighborhood,

Which is intent 'gainst our country's peace.

Guard well your water-ways, and let none pass.

With the Spanish countries we are at peace.”

Harman. By my patron, St. Patrick, this is news.

Who leads this? Where and what is this movement?

Burr. Some wicked people have said it is me.

Mess. You are not named in this, though 'tis said so.

Your converts from the militia is told.

Burr. Misinformed, vicious people, have done this.

There is no truth in this report at all,

As far as Colonel Burr is concern'd in't.

Mess. Colonel Phelps has called the militia out.
They will be here soon.

Burr. Go, report at once.
Tell at headquarters what you have heard.
I will answer to those in authority—

Yet, hold, tell them there is some great mistake. [*Exit.*

Burr to Har. Friend, all this will cause us grave vexation.
I can not answer to Colonel Hugh Phelps.
I have not witnesses, and do not care
To be detained with useless argument.
We'll answer at the right time when we please.
I will leave here to-night, so fare-you-well. [*Exit.*

Harman. I'll be soon with you—

What strange things happen?

Some idle, worthless folks, have started this.

We are in the right, and we will show them,

When we are ready, as he has just said.

We do not start war against this country,

Nor do we go against the government.

We may have to kill a few Indians,

And some Spaniards, but that is nothing.

*Enter COLONEL PHELPS, in uniform, and OFFICER GRAHAM,
in citizen's dress.*

Harman. Friends, I give you welcome. Why are you
come?

You come with troops. Tell me the import of 't.

Phelps. [*Aside.*] 'T is strange he says all this; does he
not know?

Or can it be that he has been lied to?

[*To Har.*] I have orders to stop and arrest all
Who are connected with this conspiracy.

Colonel Burr is here, and his plans are known,
And you are directly engaged with him.
He is plotting 'gainst our country's welfare.
He would have civil war; and if this fails,
A conquest of Mexico he desires.
Kentucky, Tennessee, Carolina,
Georgia, and Ohio are to be bribed
With plunder of the Spanish provinces.
With the Washita mask he deludes some.
Napoleon and George of England both say
Americans shall not cut Spanish throats,
And this is pleasing to our government.
Wherefore have citizens the right to bring
Trouble and war on a peaceful country?
Federal government should be supreme;
No state or party shall usurp the power.

Harman. 'Tis true Burr has been here, but he has
gone;

'Tis true that I am connected with him;
'Tis true that many more will join us here;
But not for the purpose you allege.

Graham. [*Aside.* Is he a knave or a deluded fool?

He has great sticking qualities, at least.

Burr put on the cloth; he'll not remove it.]

We come to give you warning—pray, take heed.
No arrests have been made, but soon will be.
Withdraw at once from this outrageous scheme.

Harman. 'T'is news you bring, but you are in the
wrong.

It will be most unjust to arrest us;
We go peacefully to settle out West.

Phelps. Take our advice; countermand your orders

For boats and stores ; avoid dire destruction,
Which you 'll surely meet if you continue.

Harman. I will not withdraw ; I am in the right.

Phelps. I come here with soldiers and this order
To warn you and arrest this Colonel Burr ;
But he has taken flight and departed.
Open your eyes ; or, if they are open,
See and understand that you will be lost.
There are none so blind as those who won't see.

Harman. Part paid now, I will have my boats and
stores.

Phelps. Your boats and stores for this will be detained.

Harman. I will test this in the courts to-morrow.

Graham. Will you stick to Burr, now that you know
all ?

Harman. Indeed, 't is you who knows all, and not me.
You retail here some mischievous plans,
Which I do not know about, and care less.
I will remain in this, just where I am.

Graham. I am sent by gracious hands in power
To guard against or right a wrong that's done.
We leave you to your fate. [*Exeunt PHELPS and GRAHAM.*]

Harman. Burr has enemies, this is very plain ;
Also, he has wise and powerful friends.
'T is well he did not stay and waste his time.
They know it all ; nothing can be told them.

Enter PETER.

Peter. Good master, the soldiers crowd each other
At the wharf, there are so many of them.
The guests are in alarm ; many have gone.

Harman. Has Tyler gone? If not, I leave with him.

Peter. They pushed off this evening.

Harman. I will follow.

Get ready a boat, with four good oarsmen.

Go quietly and quickly—tell no one.

Will meet them at the creek directly.

Orders will be given you to-morrow.

Peter. Good master, can you not delay till morn?

Ill-omens, with their fur-covered bodies,

With clawed beaks, hands for feet, and quilled hair,

Hang on all the trees with their heads downward;

And they all smell of the mold-covered tomb.

At this peculiar time you should stay here.

Harman. Imperative business calls me away.

Follow strictly all orders I send you.

There are to be great happenings throughout the West.

If you knew more of the present times,

You would see that I am acting wisely.

Peter. I do not doubt your course; but, good master,
These soldiers already are unruly.

Harman. Colonel Phelps will not let things go amiss.
Tell him that I have gone; you attend him.

Your faithfulness to me will now be tried. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter PHELPS, and sergeant in full uniform.

Phelps. Sergeant, place a picket on the east points;
Armed men are expected to land to-night.

Place all under arrest, and tie the boats.

Be firm, but gentle; bring them before me. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter MRS. BLENNERHASSETT, with her two little boys and
Peter.

Mrs. Blen. Peter, come here. Tell me what all this means.

My Harman, Colonel Burr and his daughter,
All have gone, and soldiers take possession
Of our home, intent upon destruction.

Peter. I have not been informed. Instructions are :
Hold my tongue ; keep secluded ; attend you ;
Think not too much ; and, what you think, keep it ;
Attend to my affairs, such as they 've been.

Mrs. Blen. You 've told me some, now tell me all you know.

Your face and actions belie your words.

Peter. Kind mistress, all is not well ; all have fled.
No one should flee who goes away in peace—
Suspicion rests on him who runs away.
The trip out West is the cause of all this ;
Some dire plot and wrong seems joined with it.
That Colonel Burr is to be arrested,
And calamity fall on those with him,
Is now the talk and rumors set abroad.
Some boats and soldiers will be here to-night,
Who go out West. We can leave with them, if
You think it well. Master's boats will be held.

[*Gun shot.*

Mrs. Blen. We will go ; make haste, and get in readiness.

To remain here will be certain death. [*Exit Peter.*
Do n't cry, my little ones, I will protect you.
O, Harman, why have you deserted me ?

Enter servant.

Servant. Good lady, the soldiers and their comrades
Are cutting the trees, and firing the barn,
And destroying every thing in their reach.
We do all we can to prevent these things,
But are powerless ; they drive us away.

Mrs. Blen. O, God in heaven, have I sinned 'gainst
Thee ? *[Exit servant.]*
Forgive me. Help me and my little babes.

Enter PHELPS, sergeant, and female servant.

Phelps. Dear madam.

Mrs. Blen. Most welcome friend, help me now.

Phelps. Orders are given ; lawlessness shall cease.
I've ne'er seen its equal, and ne'er wish to,
And those who trespass will repent the day—
Some may look into the mouths of guns for it.
Command me, madam, I will serve you.

Mrs. Blen. May I go away ?

Phelps. Select your own time.

Mrs. Blen. Some boats reach here to-night ; they go
out West.

Phelps. If they are not detained you may join them.

Mrs. Blen. Why should they be detained ?

Phelps. There is danger
If they are with Burr they will be detained.
Some grave rumors are abroad about him ;
Troops have been ordered out to stop his plans.
Know you as much as Harman of his plans ?

Mrs. Blen. All I know is to settle Washita.
I do not like it, and told Harman so ;

But he insists, and I must follow him.

But see, our home is now being destroyed.

Once my loved home, but soon all will be gone—

Ruin, waste, and want will soon reign here.

Owls, bats, and reptiles will be tenants.

Phelps. A likely future, but do not grieve so.

'T's not too late for Harman to withdraw

From this unlawful plan of Colonel Burr.

I've tried to dissuade him from this venture,

But he will not hear me. He will be lost.

Ex-Vice-President Burr is a traitor.

Mrs. Blen. O, God, and we have been misled by Burr!

Forgive, forgive us, we are not guilty.

Oh, Harman, please come back! O, Colonel Phelps,

We have not joined with this intention;

We are not guilty; we are not guilty;

The gallows—the gallows—no—no, no, no! [*Swoons.*

[*Curtain.*]

ACT III—SCENE I.

GENERAL WILKINSON'S *headquarters at New Orleans. Discovered, GENERAL WILKINSON asleep on a couch; two corporals under arms at the door—LIEUTENANTS CUSHING, PORTER, SWANN, KINGSBURY. All in full uniform. Table and chairs.*

Porter. Lieutenant Swann, peace, let him sleep.

Cushing.

Comrades,

He has had a long journey from Sabine;

Night and day he has been in the saddle.

In order to reach here he has braved

Fatigues beyond endurance of most men.

Swann. I am anxious to have my commission,
And be on my way to the British ships.

Cushing. His delay will not embarrass you. Wait.
When you receive your orders, then let your
Anxiety seize you for fulfillment.

Porter. Come, talk aside, that we may not wake him.

Swann. Cushing, relate to us of the visit
Of Samuel Swartwout at Natchitoches.

Cushing. One morning, without shadow, he appeared
With a letter from General Dayton,
Stating that he had important business.
He requested to see the general,
Which was, of course, at once complied with.
The general asked him what he wanted.
He said he had come from New York, and that
He was told that the troops and militia
Were assembling against the Spaniards.
He wished to be enrolled as a volunteer.
It did not take long to see through the ruse.
He produced some papers, then strolled out.

Swann. Did Swartwout remain to hear the contents?

Cushing. No; he knew all about it. He remained
In camp a short while, then suddenly left.
The papers which he bore were in cipher,
From Colonel Burr, and ran something like this:
“I will land one thousand men at Natchez;
Thousands of slaves in your territory
Are ready. I have placed leaders ’mong them.
We siege Baton Rouge, New Orleans, then
To Mexico. Be ready with your troops.
A vast amount of money can be had
At New Orleans; also, from the Spaniards.”

The general was completely unhorsed.
His remount was exceedingly clever.
He said, "I do not like this. He has chang'd
From that of a colony to conquest.
He still wishes to force me into it.
Now do I know the plot is really on?"

Swann. Well, that was enough to enliven camp.

Cushing. Yes, it did, most effectually.

A messenger from Officer Graham
Arrived in a few days, from Marietta,
With a dispatch containing more news:
'"Aaron Burr is a leader in a plot
'Gainst the peace and welfare of our country.
President Jefferson has been advised.
Boats, men, and military stores have
Been seized at Marietta by the zeal
And promptness of Governor Tiffin,
Of Ohio. Burr was arrested at
Lexington, Kentucky, upon charges
Preferred by J. H. Daviess, attorney.
Popular feeling is with Colonel Burr.
'Tis said the Federalists are 'gainst him.
The honorable court either did not
Or could not know the truth. He has escaped."

Swann. War with foreign powers is bad enough,
But internal strife and treason is worse.

Cushing. Porter received orders to have ready
One hundred men, and go to New Orleans,
Bearing letters to Governor Claiborne,
To secure the French artillery, and
Stop and board all crafts descending the river;
Advise the commander at Vera Cruz.

Lieutenant Smith was sent to Washington
With papers to President Jefferson.
The General at once left for Sabine.
I came here with all available men.

Swann. What pretext has Colonel Burr to ground the
Idea of the general's assistance?

Cushing. In seventeen eighty-nine there was a plan
To annex Mexico, but it fell through.
The general and Governor Miro,
Also the Spanish minister, agreed
That it would be good for all concerned.
'T was favored by the administration.
Things have chang'd since then, and the general
Has gone on with the grand march of the events.
Burr still thinks it is eighty-nine. Ha! ha!

Swann. He is a bold, dangerous man.

Cushing. Oh, yes;
There's nothing he wont do to gain his ends.
Poor, deluded would-be usurpers;
They had better make a trip to Mars,
Than hope to execute their present plans.

Porter. He moves; perchance he dreams; let's have
quiet.

*Enter two women, clad in white, representing Mars and Themis,
Mars in armor, and Themis with wreath and scales; they
approach the couch, and make a few passes, such as the seal
of Jupiter and the seal of Mars, or other appropriate signs.
These signs are set out in Appendix of this play.*

Mars. All hail, Commander Wilkinson!
War is on; there's work to be done.
Hark! hark! the bugle and the drums

Proclaim to you—the foe, he comes.
Arise! and call the soldiers in.
Instruct them on the battle's din.
Now let the war-horse champ his bit,
Shot and fire the cannons spit.
Send red ruin throughout the land,
Where'er a traitor lifts his hand.
In you the people look for strength
To crush his cruel plans at length.
Put on your armor, draw your blade,
Nor rest you till the last is laid
Under the sod.

Themis. All hail, Commander Wilkinson!
May your laurels by peace be won.
The standard of the law now raise,
And on it let the people gaze.
These frightened souls are in alarm.
Protect and shield them from all harm.
To mete out justice to each one,
By gentle measures shall be done.
No cruelties shall your hands know.
Let all in peace to their homes go.
Malignant men on land and sea
Will brand you with the *Fleur de lis*;
But do not waver. Be firm and true.
They'll rue the day when they mark you;
So be it done. [*Exeunt* MARS and THEMIS.]

Wilkinson. [*Awakes.*] Lieutenants, did you call?

Cushing. No, General.

Wilkinson. Did none approach my couch? I had a dream.

Cushing. No, General; we wished to leave you sleep.

Wilkinson. Then no matter.

Cushing. Can we serve you?

Wilkinson. Yes, yes.

Lieutenant Swann, here are my dispatches.

Safely guard them, and go by first boat to

Jamaica. Hand them to Admiral Drake.

Swann. The boat leaves to-night. I will go with it.

[*Exit SWANN.*]

Enter messenger. Hands note to Wilkinson.

Wilkinson reads:

“I will call on you to-day.—Governor Claiborne.”

*Enter messenger. Hands notice to Wilkinson. [*Exit Mess.*]*

Wilkinson reads:

“Aaron Burr, with men and arms, has reached Natchez.

General Adair is on his way to New Orleans.—*John Graham.*”

Cushing, take a guard and arrest at once

P. V. Ogden and Samuel Swartwout. [*Exit CUSH.*]

*Enter messenger. Hands notice to Wilkinson. [*Exit Mess.*]*

Wilkinson reads:

“Your papers have reached me. General Eaton has made a Confession. Offers from the military companies of

New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Boston of their

Aid have been received. You are in charge of the troops.

Also call to your aid the militia in your district.

Will forward no men from here at present.—*Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States.*”

Enter messenger Hands notice to Wilkinson. [Exit Mess.

Wilkinson reads :

“ General Adair, in charge of men and arms, has touched
The wharf.—*Lieutenant Edmunds.*”

Lieutenant Kingsbury, here are orders

For the arrest of General Adair. *[Exit KING.*

Enter GOVERNOR CLAIBORNE.

Wilkinson. Governor Claiborne, I'm glad to see you.

Claiborne. General, these are stirring times; what
news?

Wilkinson. I have concluded peace with the Spaniards
At the Sabine river. Read these papers. *[Hands dispatches.*
Have you made request to suspend the writ?

Claiborne. Yes.

Wilkinson. When will martial law be proclaimed?

Claiborne. I can not name the exact minute now.
Have you a messenger?

Wilkinson. At your service.

Claiborne. Here are orders to put an embargo
On all vessels. Have this published at once. *[Exit Mess.*
I have word that the militia has been
Tampered with by some unprincipled men
And wicked politicians. I can not
Confide much in them.

Wilkinson. That's deplorable.

Claiborne. I have ordered an investigation.

Wilkinson. Here are my orders for the arrest of
Major Floyd and Dr. Eric Bollmann. *[Exit Porter.*

Enter a court deputy. Hands notice to Wilkinson. [Exit Mess.

Wilkinson reads :

Well, well, a writ of habeas corpus,
Made returnable to Judge James Workman.
They resort to the quirks and quibbles now.
The arm of a prejudiced court is sought.
To what dirty uses a court of law
Can be brought.

Claiborne. This is not his first action.
He stands in with both Livingston and Clarke.
He oppos'd the merchants' public meeting,
To devise means to protect the city.
It would be strange should he not distinguish
Himself soon in some other brilliant way.

Wilkinson. The present argues he is aching for't.

Claiborne. The present argues he will ache for it.

Wilkinson. Pending the act, I will not notice this.

Claiborne. Their decision should be made known to-day.

Wilkinson. I will hole it.

Claiborne. It should be holed.

Wilkinson. He may want it.

Claiborne. He should want for it.

Wilkinson. Then it goes.

Claiborne. If it goes, it must not stay.

Wilkinson. I mean it stays ; but it stays while it goes.

Enter CUSHING.

Cushing. General, the prisoners are in jail.

Enter JUDGE JAMES WORKMAN.

Wilkinson. Good day, judge ; is the court over ?

Claiborne.

No, no ;

He has come to court you over.

Workman.

My friends

Affairs are unpleasant and serious.

These war-like proceedings have alarmed
And frightened the people beyond control.

They are entirely unwarranted.

The civil authority is ignored,
And the people's liberty imperiled.

Governor Claiborne, I appeal to you

On behalf of the civil authority ;

And, General, I demand that you shall

Honor the process and writs of the law.

I demand that the prisoners be freed.

Claiborne. Judge, the executive has no power
To liberate the parties who are jailed.

Power lies with the judiciary ;

But these are no common times, which you know,

And the delays incident to the law

Should not be used for delays only.

Wilkinson. No man holds higher in respect than I

The laws of this country ; but mark you now,

The present times warrant means to guard

Against the uplifted hand of Treason,

Horrors of anarchy and civil war.

The charges 'gainst those whom I've arrested

Is misprision of treason against the

Government of the United States.

I have seized them, as I shall all others,

Without regard to standing or station.

And all law-abiding citizens need

Not fear arrest.

Claiborne. An unlawful act has not yet been done,
And Judge Matthews will not be able to
Hang the general for what he has done.
If this uprising is not taken by
The throat it will cause much blood to undo.

Wilkinson. I am fully aware that by the law
Purchase of arms and boats is no offense.
'Tis the design, overt act, and intent,
Which are considered actionable, and
We have proof that all of these have been done.
Any blackguard can swear out a writ,
And the court can not take notice of him.
When I am ready, I will make returns,
But not now ; not now.

Workman. I will summon you before the court.

Wilkinson. That remark, at this time, is unworthy
Of any judge.

Workman. I will see if the courts
Are to be trampled upon.

Claiborne. Pah, Workman.

Wilkinson. Judge, look out for your robes. The bench
is white.
You should be as white and clean as the bench.

Workman. I will not tolerate this insult.

Wilkinson. You came here without request, and none care
Whether you will or will not tolerate.
'Tis fitting for the military court
To preside at this time on these cases.
It is more speedy than the civil courts,
But equally just and reassuring.
There are no lawyers to split the split hairs,
And no judges who have been corroded
By the breath of faction.

Enter messenger. Hands notice to WILKINSON. [Exit Mess.

Workman. Judges have indeed much to encounter.
Every case takes its own especial route.

Wilkinson. And every route is lined with guards.
The race of honest ones is not extinct.

I will return shortly. *[Exit WILKINSON.*

Claiborne. He is honest.

Workman. I do not like him.

Claiborne. No one thought of you when he was born.

Workman. There's much said against him in the city.

Claiborne. This is mere malice ; for his enemies
Report every thing that envy can suggest
To depreciate his worth and character.

Workman. But he must respect the law, and produce
The prisoners ; and if I can get no
Aid from you I will resign.

Claiborne. I shall keep the stand which I have taken.

Workman. Then you shall receive my resignation.

Claiborne. All papers you send me with this intent
Will be acceptable and received.
Be a discreet and law-abiding man.
The general will not brook trifling.

Enter WILKINSON.

Workman. Will you respect the mandates of the court ?

Wilkinson. Not now ; not now.

Workman. By the Gods of heaven,
You shall hear from me ; you shall hear from me.

Wilkinson. Pah ! Out upon this outrageous oathing.
Poor man, calling on the Gods of heaven,

Of hell, of earth, of fantastic idols,
Of hobgoblins, and of the holy wind,
To obey his whims to wreak his vengeance,
Or to dislocate the laws of nature,
Because his brain is caught by a humor,
Is foolish.

Workman. You shall hear from me.

Wilkinson. Quite likely.

[*Exit WORKMAN.*]

Claiborne. Nature seems to have gone amiss on him.
His deformities are subjects for pity.

Wilkinson. He is an Acteus, who picks up the water
Out of the river Styx, and sprinkles it on
The earth, from whence proceeds calamities.

Enter Messenger. Hands CLAIBORNE a notice.

Claiborne. Do n't be surprised, general; here it is.

Workman's resignation. I shall accept.

Take this to the judge. [*Exit Mess.*]

Enter KINGSBURY and PORTER.

Kingsbury. General, your orders have been executed.
Judge Workman, with some militia, beat "to arms"
In the street, and great excitement reigns.

Wilkinson. Porter, here are orders for the arrest
Of Judge James Workman. Take him to the fort.

[*Exit PORTER.*]

Claiborne. James Workman, we have heard from you,
indeed.

I expected it. The fellow has lost
His meager allowance of wits. Ha! ha!

Wilkinson. Before I will permit these proceedings,
I will crowd full the forts and jails.

Lieutenant Cushing, take one company
To the scene of this disturbance. [Exit CUSH.]

Enter Messenger. Hands notice to WILKINSON. [Exit Mess.]

Wilkinson. [Reads.] "Aaron Burr has been arrested
at Bayou Pierre,
But has escaped; expect an uprising among the slaves
In your district.—*General George Poindexter.*"

Wilkinson. Kingsbury, get ready six companies
Of cavalry. Come here for the orders. [Exit KINGSBURY]
All this, and I have not fired a shot.

Claiborne. No need of it, if you can do without.

Wilkinson. I trust it may be so.

Enter Messenger. Hands notice to WILKINSON.

Wilkinson. [Reads.] "Recent reports from you, and
of you, are satisfactory,
And approved.—*Thomas Jefferson, President.*"

Claiborne. General, I congratulate you.

[Curtain.]

SCENE II.

A hall at the Inn at Wakefield. Enter landlord.

Landlord. Vel dis nodice vas bring me here to-day,
Und dat solger he say to me dat I,
Dis nodice, may be hanged up right away.
Hang dat nodice mit a viewable place.
Der guvenor say dis business to him.
O yah, say I, you habe ein beer mit me.

Yah, Dutchy, say he, I vill habe ein beer.
Nein, nein, my name vas Jacob Kroutzmeyer,
Und he laugh und he stay mit me fünf beer.
I care me not; he vos a nice feller.
Dat vas arranged very nice, dis money.
Two dowsand dollers reward; I catch him.
Und dat Guvenor he wants him catched.
I do me my best for dat Guvenor.
He vas a nice man down in New Orleans,
Und dhose peobles say so much about him.
If dat Mister Perkins sees dis nodice;
He vas much excited already now.
I vas a loyal man to Faderland,
Und to dis country I vas now de same.
So dis Guvenor business I fix me.
I stick me dis nodice mit the bar.

[Exit.]

REWARD.
\$2,000
FOR THE ARREST OF
AARON BURR.

PROCLAMATION BY
W. C. C. CLAIBORNE,
Governor of Louisiana.

SCENE III.

Tavern scene at Wakefield. Discovered, NICHOLAS PERKINS, SHERIFF THEODORE BRIGHTWELL, playing backgammon; KATE, daughter of landlord. A small bar, two tables, chairs, and stove.

Bright. 'Tis my throw. I have you; you have lost.

Perkins. We will have another game. Kate, kindly Fill up our glasses.

Bright. And spare the water.

Perkins. Prepare for defeat. Have you heard the news?

Bright. Of what import?

Perkins. Colonel Burr has escaped From General Poindexter, at Pierre.

Bright. Reports to me said he was arrested, And was to be tried before Judge Bruin.

Perkins. Aye, but there was something wanting in the Proceedings of the grand jury also.

Judge Bruin assumed the distinguished

Role of advocate, casting off his robes.

So Colonel Burr, being released on bail,

Did not appear in court upon summons.

He has made an ignominious flight,

Leaving all his men, boats, and stores behind.

Bright. That is positively disgusting.

Perkins. It is most remarkable that the judge Should prostitute himself to Colonel Burr.

Bright. And still we wonder at crime.

Perkins. If General Wilkinson should get him—

Well, there are no flutamagildas with
The General—that would be the end of Burr.

Bright. Perkins, every one swears by Wilkinson.
Indeed, he is a most noble, true man.

Perkins. Every one loves and esteems him.

Bright. I say,

Is there reward offered?

Perkins. 'Tis so set forth
In recent dispatches come to the fort.
We should not wait for offers of rewards.
Proclamation for arrest is enough.
Traitors should be arrested for their crimes;
And meet punishment according to law
Should be unconditionally given.
Shall we hang a man for the killing of one,
Yet another, who would slaughter thousands
Of men, defenseless women and children,
And attempt the ruin of his country,
Go free and unmolested through the land
Until a reward is offered for him,
And much discussion as to quality
And quantity of same before action
Be determined for his apprehension?
Methinks this is weak patriotism.
Men have fought and died for tyrant rulers,
For kings and queens, and for religion's sake.
Is there a man so base who would withhold
To help a free country in times of need?
We want no rewards for actions like these.
Rewards are not given to hire men,
To pay them for their loyalty. No, no.
But to reimburse them for expenses.

Come I on him, or he on me, I would
Make a prisoner of him right shortly.
Come, what say you? Would you join me in this?

Bright. Aye, and quickly. We will have one more
glass.

A good hot brimmer this time.

Enter JACOB.

Jacob. Mine friends.

Bright. Ah, Jacob, what have you?

Jacob. Dot vas some Guvenor business.

Perkins. Well! well!

The Governor's reward for the arrest
Of Colonel Burr. Sheriff, here is your chance.

Jacob. Where shall we hang him?

Perkins. Let me assist you.

We will hang it here. It will be in view.

Jacob. Dats what the solger say; in vieu, in vieu.

Bright. Ha, that is grand.

Perkins. The notice already

Has worked its charm.

Bright. I did not mean it.

Perkins. I did not intend any reflections;
Only it is quite a stimulator.

Bright. To-morrow, I'll look about the county.
Come, Perkins, let's go home; I feel quite tired.

Perkins. Don't delay for my sake. I shall remain.

Bright. Jacob, is my horse ready?

Jacob. Yah, he vas.

Bright. Come out and help me. Good night to you all.
All important business in this district

Should be made known to me. If any news
Of Colonel Burr reaches here, send for me. [Exeunt.

Perkins. Good night.

Kate. Poor sheriff, he drinks a little too much.

Perkins. He will forget it, and begin over
To-morrow. But we will forget him now.

We will talk on a theme more to our liking.

Dear Kate, tell me you love me.

Kate. Indeed, I do.

Perkins. And you will be my dear little wife.

Kate. Yes.

Perkins. Dear Kate, when will you name the day?

Kate. We will be married next month.

Perkins. I love you.

Enter JACOB.

Jacob. Vell, my children, some more of dat vedding?

Kate. Yes, father.

Jacob. Vell, have you fixed dat time yet?

Perkins. Next month is the time. You will consent?

Jacob. O yah, I love you both very much.

Perkins. And we both love you. Don't we, Kate.

[Loud rapping at the door. BURR in disguise dress, and boy.

Perkins. Ho, without!

Jacob. Two horsemen.

Enter BURR and Guide. BURR's disguise: long overcoat,
with cape of coarse stuff, gray color; coarse pantaloons
of copperas dye; a coat of drab cloth, wide brimmed
beaver hat (white, but soiled), two large pistols in his
belt. Guide: in home-spun, coarse cloth, large slouch
hat, pantaloons in the tops of heavy boots, one large
pistol in his belt.

Jacob. Friendts, come in and varm yourself.

Burr. Boreas is out with his little boy ;
They have great sport with lonely travelers.
'Tis very welcome and inviting here.
Landlord, give us a glass of something warm,
Then tell us the road to Colonel Hinson's,
We put up there to-night.

Perkins. 'Tis not easily pointed out, friends ;
Seven miles over a dangerous road,
With many turns and fordings.

Jacob. Youst stay
Till morning, I vill send a guide mit you.

Burr. I thank you for your hospitality ;
We can not delay.

Jacob. Vell, I will do my best ;
Come to the door.

Burr. Give us something to eat,
And another glass—you keep good liquor ;
We have had a rough ride to-night.

Kate. Sir, what may I bring you ?

Burr. O, some warm dish.

Jacob. Kate, youst fix up a varm lunch. [*Exit KATE.*
Sirs, I will fix your horses mit the shed.

[*Exit JACOB.*

Burr. The roads are not well kept in this district.

Perkins. Work on them will be started soon.

Burr. How far
Is it to the Pensacola road ?

Perkins. To the nearest point it's about twelve miles,
But it is not laid out near Hinson's house.

Enter KATE, with dishes. Sets the table for BURR. The guide eats at the bar. BURR sits at the table.

Enter JACOB.

Jacob. You have nice horses, my friendt, und
Very nice saddles.

Burr. They cost a round sum.
Every thing is high priced through the West.

Jacob. Dat was so, but we soon have better times.

*JACOB goes behind the bar. PERKINS and KATE talk off at
one side. BURR talks aside.*

Burr. I have had a close escape with my life.
'Tis best escape with one's life, than without.
The soldiers are much inflamed.
Demonstrations at Pierre denote ill.
Should their sentiments spread to the people,
I may meet with personal violence.
Civil authority is much debauched.
When the voice of the mob fills judicial chairs,
When party aid outweighs capacity,
When ignorance and arrogance controls
Learning and character, look for the fall.
But, this is to be found in Republics.

Kate. Fine looking, distinguished traveler.
Any noted people expected here?

Perkins. I have heard of none.

Kate. He has small feet,
And such bright eyes; see how he looks around?
That slouch hat ill becomes his handsome face.

Perkins. Watch him; he is looking at the notice.

Kate. He is surprised ; he shakes a little.

Burr. I say, landlord, when did you get that card ?

Jacob. Der solger bring him, und dat vas nodice
For Colonel Burr to stay away from here.

Burr. Should he come here, and you apprehend him,
You receive two thousand dollars reward.

It has been told he has caused much trouble.

That he wants to fight the Western people.

The soldiers and people wish to catch him ?

Jacob. Yah, yah, dat vas so, und we catch him sure.
Habe you seen dat Colonel Burr, mein friendt ?

Burr. Yes, I saw him once at Philadelphia.

Jacob. Vhat do he look like, mein friendt ?

Burr. Like a man.

Jacob. Vell, what shape man ?

Burr. O, nothing especial.
Just a common, ordinary, plain man.

Jacob. Do he look like me ?

Burr. No, not very much.

Jacob. Dat General Vilkinson ordered out
Die troops, und he will catch him very soon.

Burr. We will know more about that after while.
Colonel Burr has many friends in the West.

It will be difficult to entrap him.

Jacob. Dat vas so, he vas a very sharp man.

Burr. Where is Colonel Burr now ?

Jacob. Die solger say
At Bayou Pierre, but I do not know.

Perkins [*aside*]. Where have I heard descriptions of
that face ?

That man is in disguise ; now I have it.

My dear Kate, I have some news, be quiet.

Kate. I will.

Perkins. That is Colonel Burr.

Kate. O, my God ;

That traitor in this house ; O, Nicholas !

Perkins. Be quiet, Kate.

Kate. O, I am so frighten'd.

Perkins. You must help me.

Kate. What shall I do ?

Perkins. Listen :

I must go to the fort for Captain Gaines.

And you must keep him here till I return.

You must be a brave little girl.

Kate. I will.

Perkins. How can I escape so he won't see me ?

Kate. Go up stairs, and climb over the porch.

Take one of father's horses from the barn.

He may hear if you take your horse ; besides,

That boy will notice when he goes out.

Perkins. Now, dear Kate, give me a bottle of wine.

For pretence, I will go. You must be brave.

Kate. Father, I will get that bottle of wine

For Mister Perkins.

Perkins. I will assist you. [*Exit KATE and PERK.*

Jacob. All right, mein children,

I vill vaite on dies friends.

Burr. I say, landlord,

Who is that young man ?

Jacob. He vas our great friend.

He vas at home in der house all over.

You vant to speak some more mit him ?

Burr. Not now.

[*Aside.*] I am not overpleased with these quarters.

They are prejudiced against Burr, that is sure.
Landlord, who owns that horse out in the shed?

Jacob. Ha, you nodice him? Dat vas a fine horse.
Dat vas Mister Perkins' horse.

Enter KATE and PERKINS, with a bottle of wine and glass.

Perkins. I will go upstairs and arrange every thing.
Will return shortly. *[Exit PERKINS.]*

Burr. *[Aside.]* I feel more content.
'Tis quite probable this poor family
Do not know whom they are entertaining.
My fears were groundless, yet I must take care
Not to be surprised or caught napping.
When once on board the British iron-clad,
Which now rides at Pensacola, I'm safe.
Boy, go and have the horses ready.

Kate *[aside].* What shall I do? He will see my
Nicholas.

He has had hardly time to be away.
Boy, I will get you a lamp.

Jacob. O, no use;
Dat moon vas shining very bright to-night.
Dier vas much hay mit die shed for a lamp.
He goes mit out a lamp.

Kate. But, dear father,
Mister Perkins' horse is there, and you know
He sometimes kicks a little at strangers.

Jacob. Yah, dot vas so; I go mit him.

Burr. Landlord,
Do not worry about him. He knows how
To keep clear of horses' hoofs.

Jacob. Vell, all right. *[Exit Boy.]*

Kate [aside]. He's a stranger in my father's house.
Do I break all laws of hospitality,
And tear down the customs prescribed to hosts?
"A stranger is within thy gates; guard him."
We should protect him from unlawful harm,
But we are not called upon to break the laws,
Shield and hide him from the authorities.
Our Governor's order for his arrest
Should be obeyed by all lawful people.

Burr. Landlord, I will settle my account now.

Kate [aside]. O, how my heart beats. I am so afraid
He will hear. If he finds out about this,
He will shoot my father. I must be brave.
I can not help feeling sorry for him.
He is so tired, and he does not know
That harm is near. Every one is trying
To catch and kill him. But 'tis my duty.

Burr. Come, landlord, give me a few directions
As to the road to Colonel Hinson's house.

Kate [aside]. I must detain him. Can I serve you, sir?

Burr. Yes, my pretty girl.

Kate. What is your pleasure?

Burr. You may bring me one more glass, then I'll go.

Enter Boy.

Boy. The horses are ready, sir.

Kate. Come here, boy,
And warm yourself.

Boy. Shall I unhitch?

Burr. Wait.

Is that extra horse in the shed? [*Boy warms at stove.*]

Boy. Yes, sir.

Jacob. Habe dat horse his blanket on, boy?

Boy.

Yes, sir.

Kate brings the glass.

Kate [aside]. Hark, do I hear the horses? O, no, no.
'Tis the beating of my heart; they'll come soon.

He must stay here at all cost and hazard.

[*To BURR.*] I am sorry for you.

Burr.

You dear girl,

A man is fortunate when a young girl

Feels sorrow or pity or love for him.

Tell me, dear, why are you sorry for me?

Kate. The road you wish to take is dangerous.

There are fordings; you may meet Indians;

You do not know the way; you'll go astray.

And it is so cold out to-night, you'll freeze.

If you stay here, you will be arrested.

Burr leaves the table, and seizes Kate by the wrist.

Burr. My God, girl, what do you mean?

Kate.

You are known.

Burr. I go now. If you give a sign, you die.

[*Touches one of his pistols.*]

Kate. You will not kill me. You are Colonel Burr.

Enter PERKINS and CAPTAIN GAINES, with four soldiers who guard the door. GAINES in full uniform. PERKINS goes toward KATE. Soldiers remain at carry arms.

Gaines. Halt! Colonel Aaron Burr, I arrest you,
By warrant of our gracious President

And proclamation of our Governor,
For high treason 'gainst the United States.

Burr. I surrender.

[*Curtain.*]

ACT IV—SCENE I.

*Public parlor in the court-house at Richmond. Discovered,
BURR, MRS. ALSTON, HARMAN, and MRS. BLENNER-
HASSETT. Ordinary plain chairs and center-table. MRS.
ALSTON weeping.*

Burr. Theodosia, my life, why do you grieve?
Where is now your fortitude, your courage?
This is outrageous. You a Burr!

Theo. O father, these surroundings, this trial
And cruel persecution, unnerve me.
Condemned by the world without a hearing,
Every resource maliciously used
To show what is and will new evidence.

Burr. Think what you will, let there be no index.

Theo. My nerves are of weakly substance.

Burr. Ay, ay.

But draw them taut.

Theo. I would have them of steel.

Burr. I will give no words of consolation.

Theo. Then wind the horns for the charge. I will
respond.

Burr. Ah, now you are my daughter. Real in life,
The realization of my life's dream.
Woman, the superb, supreme creation
Of the Maker and Ruler of the worlds.

A tumult outside. Emer court deputy, followed by a miscellaneous crowd of men and boys, who stand and gaze about.

Burr [to deputy]. Now what word? And why this celebration?

Deputy. Your last motion has been overruled.

General Wilkinson has arrived. [Exit deputy.]

Burr. What brings you here, you ugly unkempt crowd.
You stand about, and stare, and gape and blink;
Think you this is some puppet show, or else
A tented booth, wherein is kept on view
The great and only living specimen
Of its kind captured in the wilds of this
Country—sixpence admission to the show.
Go hence. Get you gone, you poor monkeys.

[Exit crowd in haste.]

Harman. I am lost. Wilkinson's testimony
Will crush me. My downfall will be complete.

Enter RANDOLPH.

Burr. Dear friend, your eyes are beaming with delight.
You bring good news?

Randolph. Ay, good and also bad.
The charges 'gainst you have not been sustained.

Theo. I thank God the government has failed.

Randolph. You are free, but practically banished.

Burr. Now is victory crowned with disgrace,
And disappointed hopes thrown to the dogs.
Chained like a galley; let loose, but to die
An ignominious and shameful death,
Or live, perchance, out of the pale of man.
Like the frighten'd bird, from the hunter, flies

And dies of his wounds in the woods alone.
I have been sacrific'd by Wilkinson,
And been persecuted by Jefferson.

Randolph. Say naught against the head of our country.
'Twas his duty to take some stand in this.
You must accept the entire result.
Jefferson did not place you where you are.
You are father to the expedition
Which has aroused and shaken this country.
You know the public sentiment, I think.
And I have been your most faithful counsel,
Yet now and forever I maintain that
The President of the United States
Shall be respected and protected. [*BURR goes toward THEO.*
Blennerhassett, the charges against you
Have been annulled. You are free to go.

Harman. Free and ruined. Colonel Burr, give me
help.

Me once so happy, contented, wealthy,
[*MRS. BLENN. weeps.*

All sacrificed to you and your cause.

I, my wife and my children, are beggars.

Burr. What do I hear? What do you mean?

You contented? Why did you follow me?

I have not robbed you of your wife or wealth.

You parted with what you had knowingly.

'Twas your eager desire to get more.

To satisfy your hungry greed, you would

Have plucked the wandering stars from the vault

And hurled complaints on high for short supply.

Like the dog on the bridge, you have lost all.

Blame not me with this. 'Twas your own free will.

Harman. I gave up all at your asking.

Burr. Enough.

This silly mincing I care not to hear.

Owe you ; owe you ? Let heaven be my sworn

Enemy if I owe or pay you aught.

Though divine and human laws plead your cause,

I tell you now, I owe you nothing. Away !

Your face and distorted mind offend me.

Harman. Used up, worn out, cursed, and then thrown out.

I have outlived my usefulness. Dear wife,

Weep no more. I bow now for the last time

To man. Human sympathy is a myth.

May God help us now on our wanderings. [*Exeunt.*

Burr. The past is ruled off and the balance ta'en.

I now open with a new creditor.

Time and events will decide all.

Theo. Father, come with me.

Burr. I will. Randolph,

My dear friend, I bid you a short farewell. [*Exit RAND.*

Enter SAMUEL SWARTWOUT, MAJOR ASHLEY, *citizen's dress,*
and LIEUTENANT CUSHING, *in full uniform, all hurriedly.*

Ashley. He is a formidable opponent.

He is gentle when not disturbed,

But a perfect tiger when aroused.

Sam. Mark you, he shall meet me.

Burr. How now, my friends ?

Ashley. An encounter is contemplated.

Sam. And will be put on.

Theo. Father, good bye. Remember me.

Burr. My dear, sweet child, I will be with you soon.

[*Exit THEO.*

Friends, proceed ; and he that wavers, let him
Ne'er proclaim another weighty matter,
For I take it there is concern abroad.

Ashley. 'Tis easily told—a challenge.

Burr [*aside*]. How I hate that word and its consequences.

It grates upon my ears and worries me.
'Tis a guide-board which points on to the pit,
Out of which come horrors, anguish, and woe.
'Twas a challenge that made Him curse the earth.

Sam. I've tried to meet General Wilkinson,
And tell him to his face he is a rogue,
A perfidious scamp ; but he foils me.
These papers will show what I say, and more.
Lieutenant Cushing, here is my challenge.
Hand this with my profound disgust to him. [*Hands paper.*

Cushing. I may forget this last ; better pen it.

Sam. Ah, you, a lieutenant, talk to me. Go!

Ashley. Peace, peace, or I'll withdraw, dear friend
Swartwout.

He is the best swordsman in the army.
Why pick a quarrel with him without cause?
Should he draw, he will make a corpse of you.

Burr. Hold ! It is unmanly to be mad.
This trait is owned exclusively by beasts.
Put vengeance in your sword, not in your words.
[*Aside.*] If it is to be, it will be.

Cush. to Sam. I'll be your messenger and his second,
But 'tis not likely he will notice this. [*Holds up paper.*

In open combat, when he draws his sword,
A man of honor and integrity
Must face him. See to it that you are one.
For all that's mean and contemptible
In the shape of man, he spurns. Nor will he
Lose his wits for such a gush of words
As are contained in here. I will 'tend this. [*Exit CUSH.*

Ashley. 'Tis well he held his passion, for he is
As quick as lightning, and as sure as death.
He could have cut your head off with one stroke,
And long before it could be known to us.

Burr. I'm glad he has gone,
Although most gentle and unoffending,
For he has the qualities of a man.
But when wrongly used, he gives no quarter.
Out of its scabbard, his sword is alive,
And death sits on its edge. 'Tis the last seal
When he uncovers.
Find you or me his exact counterpart,
'Tis once in a generation.

Sam. Wilkinson shall accept. This duel's on.

[*BURR receives a stroke of paralysis; falls to the floor; is
taken up and placed in a chair.*]

Ashley [*in alarm*]. What is this?

Sam. A stroke, a stroke.

Ashley. God help us!

No wonder man's afraid of death. See this!

[*Points to BURR.*

So still, so quiet. Look, he seems to move.

I fear him, once my friend, his soul is gone.

O death, you harvester of time, spare us!

Enter messenger with letter.

Mess. A dispatch for Colonel Burr.

Sam. Leave it to me. [*Exit Mess.*]

Burr [*comes to*]. What has happen'd? I'm ill; yes,
I am ill.

Sam. Dizziness seized you, so we plac'd you here.

Burr [*mind wandering*]. O, I remember; we were together

A long, long time ago; yes, years ago.

Ah, I am so glad to see you again.

I have met Alexander Hamilton.

He was so kind, and he gave me pardon

For a wrong which I had done him.

Blennerhassett came and gave me pardon.

But I saw his wife and little children

Begging for a crust of bread; they were poor.

And the people cried out it was my fault;

That I had brought destruction to their home.

I fled. O, the people! O, the people!

I still hear their angry cries against me.

Sam. He is growing feeble, and dropping off.

Ashley. We must arouse him. Give him this letter.

Sam. Colonel, a message for you.

Burr. Ah, read it to me.

I have been ill; yes, I recollect all.

I am stronger now, and my brain is clear.

[*SAMUEL opens the letter, reads it to himself, drops it near*

BURR, and walks away.]

Sam. Heavenly powers, give him assistance.

[*Covers his face with his hands and weeps.*]

[BURR leans over, still being seated on chair. He then stands, totters a few steps, reads over twice.]

Burr reads:

“Theo. is dead.—Major Alston.”

O God, no! No, no, this can not be true.

It is so sad that one so young should die.

They tell me that I shall never see her.

O, my daughter Theo, my dear sweet child,

I have loved you when a prattling baby ;

And when you grew to womanhood,

You were the joy of my life, my Theo.

This life is obscure and full of sadness,

But never did I wish to live till now.

Where is now the kind God of heaven ?

Welcome dissolution ; come, give me death.

What, and he will not come at my bidding !

Then rouse up my sluggish soul and meet death ;

Hunt him up ; fight with him ; I will not live.

[*Takes a bottle of medicine from the table.*

This is a potion to heal my body ;

If I take it all, it may give me rest.

[BURR trembles so that the bottle falls and breaks.

Death is a runaway when he is sought,

But I will force him. I will force him.

[*Totters, falls and dies.*

[ASHLEY goes to the door and calls. Enter four men with a stretcher ; same having legs ; take up the body ; cover it with a black cloth, and stand waiting.

Ashley. There's all that's left of Aaron Burr, poor corpse.

Birth, time and death, the three magic numbers.

A faithful soldier ; learned politician ;

Once the proud power in this country ;

Then wert drawn down into the seething pool
Of ruin and outlawry, Alas! 'tis sad
That thou art taken off at this untimely time.

Sam. This scene quickens my flagging resolve.
I take an oath to make this now my cause,
And add to it my former grievance.

[*To porters.*

Bear away the body and attend it.

[*Porters take up the body. Exit.*

Come friend with me to the woods of Richmond,
There I will make a ghost of him I meet. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE 2.

*Woods at Richmond. Enter GENERAL WILKINSON and
LIEUTENANT CUSHING in full uniform; straight swords
at sides.*

Cushing. We are first here.

Wilkinson.

That is well, we can talk.

I do not care to and must not fight him.

'Tis unwarranted that I should do so.

There's no substantial grounds for this duel.

I have not inflicted him for any

Personal or vindictive cause or motives.

I have ne'er trod him under foot. Besides,

He was one of the conspirators, and

It would ill-become me to notice him.

Cushing. We will try to settle amicably.

The stand you take is honorable, and

Nothing can be said against it.

Wilkinson. But I can not account for his actions.

Cushing. He is hot-brained and ill-disposed.

Perchance he does not know why he does this.

Faith, I think this is nearest to the truth.

If he has any reasoning faculties,

We will call them, and see what he will do.

Willk. I will respect a true point of honor;

Will face the facts, and maintain my action;

But in a trumped-up street broil of this kind

I do not care to be identified.

For in a bold-faced fashion he says

Merely: that for past injuries, affronts,

And ill-usage, his honor demands it.

Cush. Such like talk can be heard in asylums.

Here they come, all out of breath, now for it.

Enter SAMUEL and ASHLEY hurriedly, and out of breath.

ASHLEY bearing a sword.

Sam. Ha! fellows; first come, first served. This is well.

Willk. What is it you wish to serve?

Sam. [*aside*].

Ah! the knave.

[*to Willk.*] A dish for worms, what else did you suppose?

Think you this is a wedding feast, or else

A celebration of a birth? O, no! [*Ashley shakes with fear.*

I'll rid you of these petty thoughts, you rogue.

Cush. [*aside*]. Surely the fellow has gone daft.

[*to Sam*].

See here,

You reckless chap, give heed to your second.

Take some of that fire out of your brain.

Put it to his feet that he may keep warm.

He has more than the ague, I'll be sworn,

Or else I see a silly simpleton

Who keeps his brains in an ill-mannered place—

His shins.

[*Sam throws off his coat, then his hat, and continues to get ready for a while.*]

Throw off your coat; let us begin
To talk of this stupid thing, this duel.

Wilk. [*aside*]. Let me have some words with this idiot.
[*to Sam*]. You wish to fight with me now, what's the grounds.

Sam. You received my challenge, that is enough.
I have not time to specify, but call it
Every thing that has happen'd this last year.
And more, I've seen the death of him who was
My friend, draw your sword, for I have at you.

Wilk. [*to Cush.*] Whose death does he allude to?

Cush. [*to Wilk.*] I do not know.

'Tis a strange layout to commemorate
Or celebrate a death with a duel.

[*To Sam*]. For whom do you wear crape?

Sam. For Colonel Burr.

Wilk. What, is he dead?

Ashley. Yes, yes; he was touched
By the finger of God—paralysis.

We were present, and saw him carried out.

Wilk. Major, can you not use your influence
To peacefully adjust this absurd duel?

Ashley. I've tried all persuasions, but have failed.

Wilk. There are many reasons which prevent me
Trying conclusions in this ill contest.

'Tis not for fear, but 'tis my honor at stake,
And my duty not to be embroiled.

I am here for peace, not for the sword.

Cush. [*to Sam*]. Throw down your sword, let us reason
this out.

Sam. You interfering fool, I'll kill you first.

[Slaps CUSHING twice with his sword.]

With that and that, I take away your honor.

Wilk. Hold, this trouble is not with him, 'tis me.

Sam. I'll make it with him. *[To Ashley].* Ashley, should I fall,

Say my wounds were had in front. *[On guard.]*

Cush. Hold off; I do not care to fight with you.

Sam. I'll kill you if you will not fight. Who cares? You'll make a pretty corpse. I have at you.

[SAM rushes for CUSHING. CUSHING draws, and with one cut breaks SAM's guard, and one thrust SAM falls and dies. CUSHING picks up one of SAM's gloves, wipes off his sword, gently drops glove on SAM.]

Cush. Conspirator, I did not want your blood.

[Returns his sword.]

You forced it on me. Peace be to your soul.

Yet may others like you fail utterly,

E'er they succeed in wrecking our fair land,

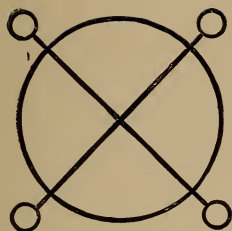
The United States of America.

[WILKINSON takes CUSHING by the arm and leave the scene.]

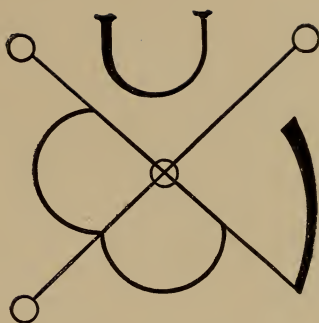
ASHLEY kneels over the dead body of SAMUEL SWARTWOUT.

[Curtain.]

THE END.



SEAL OF JUPITER.



SEAL OF MARS.

THE SACRED PENTACLE.



Front.



Back.





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 821 475 1